

STEWARDSHIP LOCAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS

Urban Green Space (UGS) Program

Authorization: s. 23.09(19), Wis. Stats.; ch. NR 51, subchapter XIII, Wis. Admin. Code

Budget: 20% of the funds appropriated for the Stewardship Local Assistance Grants; up to \$1.6 million per year (pending any legislative changes).

Objective: Provide open natural space in proximity to urban development; protect from development land with scenic, ecological or natural values in urban areas; provide land for nature-based outdoor recreation, including noncommercial gardening in urban areas.

Eligibility: Counties, cities, villages, towns, lake districts, Indian tribes, and nonprofit conservation organizations as defined under s. 23.096, Wis. Stats. The county, municipality, or Indian tribe must have an approved Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan.

Level of Assistance: Up to 50% matching grants.

Priorities: Acquisition of land in and around urban areas. Projects that provide access for the greatest number of potential users and provide the greatest opportunities for nature-based outdoor recreation.

Eligible Types of Projects: Land acquisitions that meet the objectives listed above and are part of an approved Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan.

Applications: Application information and forms are available from DNR regional Community Service Specialists and are due in the appropriate DNR regional office by May 1 of each year.

History: The Warren Knowles-Gaylord Nelson Stewardship Program was originally launched in 1990 and in its first 10 years was an outstanding success story in achieving its conservation and recreation goals by providing funding for land and easement acquisition and development of recreational facilities. With strong bipartisan support, the Stewardship program was renewed for an additional ten years as part of the 1999-01 Wisconsin State Budget. The UGS Local Assistance grant program was introduced as part of the original Stewardship Program. The source of funds is through general obligation borrowing. The state of Wisconsin sells bonds to investors now to raise the funds, then pays back the debt over the next 20 years.

Contacts: DNR regional Community Service Specialists; pages 95-98.

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